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# GIANT HOGWEED

## Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

### A Federal Noxious Weed

#### Habitat



- Ravines, roadside ditches, and riparian areas
- Residential properties and vacant lots
- Wooded or open-space areas between residential communities

#### Morphology



Height: 8–15 ft when flowering.  
Leaves: Large, compound, deeply incised, and 3–5 ft wide. Hairs on the underside are stiff, dense, and stubby but only about 0.25 mm long. Petioles have short, coarse white hairs at the base. Flower head: Flat topped and up to 2.5 ft across.

#### Public Health Hazard



Direct contact with hogweed's leaves or stems can blister the skin. Glucoside phototoxins in the plant's clear, watery sap react with sunlight to cause the painful blisters.

#### Commonly Mistaken for...



**Angelica** (*Angelica atropurpurea*), which has a smooth, purple stem, rarely exceeds 8 ft tall, and has round, white flowers.



**Cow parsnip** (*Heracleum lanatum*), which rarely exceeds 6 ft and has a flat flower cluster 1 ft wide and palmately lobed leaves. Hairs on the underside of its leaf are soft, wavy, shiny, and about 1 mm long.

#### Control Methods

The preferred method of control is integrated pest management (IPM). Site-specific control methods need to match local situations. Denial of seed production, with appropriate site rehabilitation, for 4 to 5 years usually eradicates limited local populations.



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